1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

LEGENDS.

773 538 There is an extraordinary absence of legend among all groups of Veddas who have not been greatly influenced by Sinhalese. Concerning the origin of men, natural features, and things the Veddas seem absolutely incurious, nor do their songs refer to any of these subjects. There are no stories of talking animals or of how their rock-shelters were formed; they have not even a tale of their own origin. Apart from a few accounts of the origin of particular *yaku* and the deeds they performed (e.g. the pig-hunting of Bambura Yaka) the following two legends were all that we could hear though the most diligent inquiry was made.

The Origin of Fire.

773 There was a man who had fire; he distributed this to animals, trees and stones, but a little remained to him at the end and this he swallowed. His name was Wasawatiya. "We cannot say whether he was a Vedda. Because he swallowed this fire we all get hungry, for we all have fire within us. There were men before Wasawatiya but they could not talk; otherwise they were as ourselves. Wasawatiya made and sent the first dog to those people, and the dog barked at them; so that those people feared greatly and stammering and stuttering began to talk, and the first words were *ballakai, ballakai*—'dog will bite.'" Handuna of Sitala Wanniya was our informant and he also gave the following account of the rainbow.

The Rainbow.

[821] When there is rain there is a "kind of yellow bow" (rainbow) in the sky. One of our women made a bow of wood like it and that is all.

How the hill Yakagala came by its name.

The following story was told by Wannaku of Uniche a variant occurs as a song at Sitala Wanniyā and is given i Chapter XV. Once upon a time two families of Veddas live